

# Olweiler News

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Photo Courtesy of Millersville's Archives & Special Collections

Women's Basketball team at MU, 1908

## The Treasures in Millersville's Archives

By Amy Olweiler

There is a story behind every university just as there is behind every picture. Millersville certainly has a story, and every student plays a part in it. The Archives and Special Collections are evidence of this. Rare books, oral histories, manuscripts of notebooks, diaries, ledgers, etc., yearbooks, catalogs, alumni publications, letters and more are available to any student who is interested in Millersville's story.

Marilyn Parrish, special collections librarian and university archivist, shared that Millersville has "unusually rich collections." They are particularly strong in education history and Pennsylvania German history, but students often find "the funny things" to be the most interesting. For example, Library Technician Janet Dotterer explained that in the university's earliest days (mid-19th century), detailed rules of conduct were a big deal. Conversations between students of opposite sexes were forbidden in certain halls. Meals were at set times and being tardy resulted in firm consequences. Slippers were required.

"The autograph books have [also] been fascinating to me," Dotterer continued. These were rather like the pages in modern yearbooks that are meant for signatures and messages. The penmanship of the notes, the language, and the messages all profess a different century.

Students may take certain courses that require extensive use of the archives, but anyone is able to use them for research. "It's fun to watch their reactions," Parrish said with a smile. "There's a lot of cultural assumptions broken when students look at some of the materials."

Yet both Parrish and Dotterer have observed that much of the initial spirit of Millersville has endured, especially in the excellence and affordability of education. They particularly expounded on the excellence of faculty members, beginning with men such as Wickersham, Stoddard, and Brooks, who wrote textbooks and curriculums that were utilized by schools all over the country.

A historical exhibit has recently been opened on the eighth floor of McNairy Library. Students are encouraged to visit and gain an impression of the many types of treasures Millersville has to offer within its archives.

## Defamation in print will cause serious consequences

Every journalist must know the definitions of libel and slander and how to avoid them.

By Amy Olweiler

According to the Reporter's Committee, "[libel] occurs when a false and defamatory statement about an identifiable person [or organization] is published to a third party, causing injury to the subject's reputation." Generally, libel is printed defamation and slander is spoken defamation—in journalism, spoken is also "printed" in that it is something transcribed (Merill Perlman, Columbia Journalism).

Claims or accusations that cannot be proven should not be printed. Even if a writer believes he has proof, he should still be careful, as proving claims in court can be quite challenging.

To avoid printed defamation, a writer should be sure his facts are accurate

right up front. He should refrain from exaggerating, giving his opinion, writing possible innuendos, and offering improvable conclusions. He must be wary when writing about past events—suggesting in any way that someone is still guilty of a preceding fault, for example, may bring about a libel. Publishing quotes that are defamatory places the writer in just as dangerous a position as the speaker.

Rumors ought never be repeated in print, unless one can prove their legitimacy. Even when contradicting a rumor, a writer should keep from repeating it; adding "allegedly" is not enough to get you out of libel difficulties" (BBC).

Sources, too, may sue journalists for putting words in their mouths. Journalists must always have adequate material should they be falsely accused of libel or slander. Even including quotation marks in one's notes is important. (Socialbrite).



Photo Courtesy of Facebook  
Morales (left) poses with a friend, Chrissy McQueen, at a cheer banquet.

## Hurricane Katrina victims inspire local student

By Amy Olweiler

Everyone in the United States knows about Hurricane Katrina, which in 2005, left much of New Orleans in despair. In 2009, 22-year-old Cristal Morales traveled with Habitat for Humanity, a Christian organization, to New Orleans to aid in building housing for locals who had lost their homes. Morales still considers her volunteer work to have been an invaluable experience.

"I literally built a house and a half. It really opened

my eyes to how horrible the situation was," she said.

Morales' experience genuinely moved her, as she is now devoted to community service. One of her biggest dreams is to start a non-profit organization for city kids who need an escape from the streets.

Morales is not waiting until later to help others, either; she plans to spend her Christmas break in Africa, volunteering in public schools. Morales eventually hopes to travel over the world. "I like to go big!"

## PAGE DESIGN IS NOTHING SHORT OF AN ART



BY AMY OLWEILER  
Editor-In-Chief

The visual element of a publication is just as important as the content itself. It bears the responsibility of smoothly communicating information as well as highlighting the most valuable content. Typography and page design, particularly, "strongly affect how people react to a document" (Julia Barrick Douglas, Fortis College).

Typography is the layout of type on a page. It's important for both legibility and artistic reasons. Different fonts will match the content or focus of different stories better than others. Typeface, font size, indents, subheads, and margins are some particulars of typography (Itkonen).

Page design includes every element on the page (body copy, headlines, decks, bylines, liftout quotes, etc.) and how they are positioned. The cover image of a publication determines if readers will be interested to open it up.

## THE ROLE OF THE EDITOR

By Amy Olweiler

A good editor is detailed, motivated, organized, and enthusiastic. He works well under pressure, meets deadlines, prioritizes, communicates well, and "[combines] creative and technical thinking" (creativeskillset.org). Editor's roles vary: they may check for grammatical errors, punctuation, capitalization, spelling errors, redundancy, sloppy transitions, obscure vocabulary, unsuitable jargon, or inaccurate facts. Others will review the format and technical aspects of a work, such as graph and table styles, the use of underlines, italics, boldface, and labels.

Usually editors are focused in a certain type of editing, like acquisitions or developmental editing, copyediting, fact-checking, page design, proofreading, information design, etc. (editorsforum.org).

There are levels of editing positions, too. Editors may work for book publishing companies, newspapers, magazines, or other print media companies.



Photo Courtesy of Google Images

## ACCURACY AND GRAMMAR: GOLDEN WORDS

They're the essentials of journalism; without them, there's no retaining an audience.

By Amy Olweiler

Accuracy is not a "glamorous" skill in the world of publication, but without accuracy, other reporting and writing skills are "worthless," according to Steve Buttry, editor for Digital First Media.

"Accuracy is the foundation upon which journalists must build all other skills."

-Steve Buttry

Clear and tested evidence is critical when presenting information as truth to the public. Reliability is always more crucial than being first with information. Also, all sources should be first-hand: no writer or reporter should simply count on those used by others. He should find his own. Eventually, a writer should build a "network of trusted contacts" that he might consult.

As often as possible, a writer's notes should be "contemporaneous," meaning based on information received at the time of the incident rather than based on a source's memory later. These precautions are to ensure that one's information will be able to stand up in court. The Internet should usually not be trusted. "Digital manipulation is rife" (Media Helping Media).

Grammar also requires editing. As quoted from fiction editor Beth Hill, "grammar and punctuation... are the framework that makes your story stand." Readers will easily be misled if the writing does not adhere to the consistent, dependable rules of grammar.

Yet there are times when poor grammar is deliberate and helpful. This may be done only if, according to Hill, the writer can explain why he is doing so and how it "serves the story."